Department of Advanced Education and Skills

2014 - 2015
ANNUAL REPORT

Newfoundland Labrador

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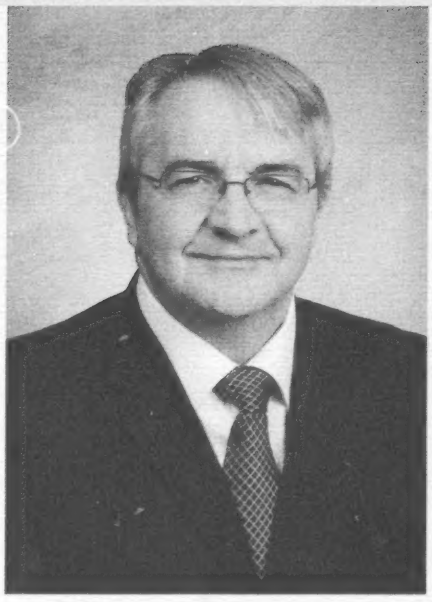

Honourable Clyde Jackman
Minister of Advanced Education and Skills

As Minister of Advanced Education and Skills, I am pleased to present the 2014-15 Annual Report. This performance report outlines the Department's activities from April 1, 2014 to March 31, 2015 and is submitted in accordance with the Department's obligation as a category one entity under the *Transparency and Accountability Act*. The Department's performance report was prepared under my direction and, as Minister I am accountable for the results reported within.

This annual report provides the opportunity to highlight some of the many accomplishments for which the Department and its employees are justifiably proud. It also documents the progress achieved towards the goals in our 2014-17 Strategic Plan.

During the first year of our strategic plan, the Department commenced a number of initiatives designed to further support people to participate in the workforce while undertaking steps to promote the alignment of labour supply with demand. The Department also collaborated with its educational institution partners to ensure deliberate measures were taken to align education and training to become more responsive to labour market needs. The Department also played an important role in helping under-represented groups transition into the workforce through the provision of social supports, education, training, and employment supports. It should be noted that the number of individuals that required financial support through the Income Support Program also continues to decrease.

As Minister, I am pleased to continue our Government's work towards aligning labour supply and demand; supporting a post-secondary education system that is accessible, affordable, and responsive to labour market needs; as well as assisting individuals to participate in the economic opportunities that this province has to offer.

As we move forward in the second year of our strategic plan, departmental staff will continue to work together with our many partners to ensure the objectives identified in our plan are achieved.

Respectfully submitted,

Clyde Jackman

CLYDE JACKMAN, MHA
MINISTER OF ADVANCED EDUCATION AND SKILLS
DISTRICT OF BURIN-PLACENTIA WEST

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growth through employment
strength in diversity
dignity by inclusion

DEPARTMENTAL OVERVIEW

The Department of Advanced Education and Skills plays a pivotal role in the province's social and economic fabric through the delivery of a range of programs and services.

Vision

Growth through employment, strength in diversity, dignity by inclusion.

Mission

By 2017, the Department of Advanced Education and Skills will have improved the quality and the delivery of supports and services.

Mandate

The Department of Advanced Education and Skills helps citizens obtain the necessary educational, financial, and social supports to achieve the greatest benefit from the opportunities that exist in the province.

To ensure the province has a skilled workforce and highly educated graduates to participate in and contribute to their communities, the Department works with employers and collaborates with private post-secondary institutions, Memorial University and College of the North Atlantic.

The Department also provides supports to meet labour market demands, increase labour force participation, facilitate immigration, promote multiculturalism and support adult literacy to strengthen individual self-reliance.

Building a strong, educated workforce is key to encouraging a robust economy and sustaining population growth.

Lines of Business

The Department operates in 31 offices throughout the province. Programs and services in the following four areas support attachment to the labour force, help meet the province's labour market needs and support individuals when they require assistance:

1. Employment supports and career services (such as career counseling, wage subsidies, apprenticeship and trade certification supports, job searches, pre-employment readiness, training and skill enhancement);

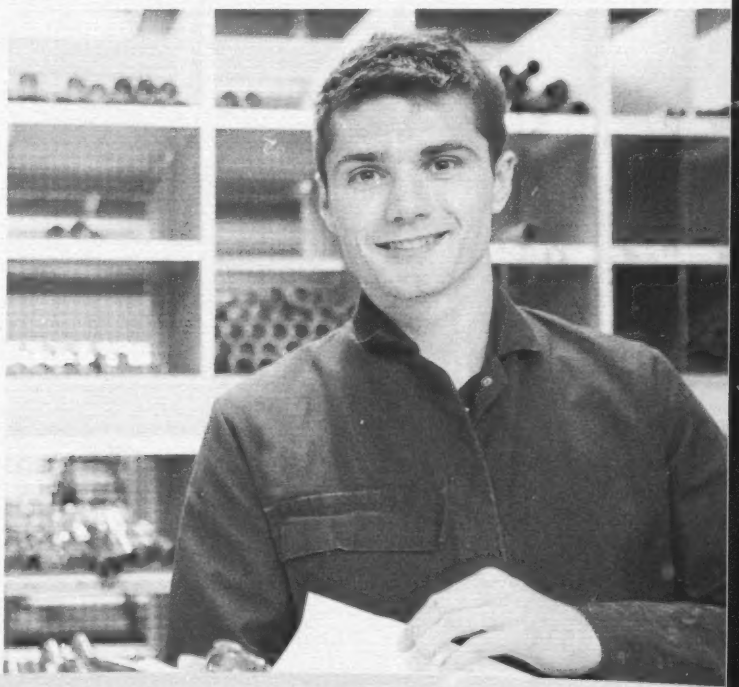
2. Income supports and basic benefits (such as monthly benefits, earning supplements and one-time benefits);

3. Labour market development and immigration (such as supporting employers with recruitment and retention, human resource planning, and providing individuals with labour market information, and trend analysis on labour market opportunities); and,

4. Post-secondary education (supports to individuals such as training, tuition supports, apprenticeship and trade certification supports, student financial assistance, student assessment, adult learning and literacy, and support to post-secondary institutions).

Further details on the Department's programs and services can be found by visiting our website at www.aes.gov.nl.ca.

Information is also available through the Provincial Government's Open Government initiative at: http://open.gov.nl.ca/. Included on this site are: the Income Support caseload statistics; the breakdown for the tuition freeze at Memorial University and College of the North Atlantic by year and institution; and, the Income and Employment Support Policy Manual.



Programs and services support attachment to the labour force, help meet the province's labour market needs and support individuals when they require assistance.

Structure

The Department's staff complement for 2014-15 consisted of 748 positions, of which 628 were permanent and 120 were temporary. The departmental gender breakdown was 75 per cent females and 25 per cent males.

Approximately 51 per cent of our employees are located in offices in the St. John's Census Metropolitan Area (CMA). This includes sites at Confederation Building, Coughlan College at Memorial University, and offices in St. John's and Mount Pearl. The remaining 49 per cent of staff are located in offices throughout the province.

On March 20, 2014, the Provincial Government announced the reorganization of the Department of Advanced Education and Skills to ensure the Department is more responsive to the changing demands of today's labour market. While this objective will be achieved without any loss of permanent jobs over a period of two fiscal years (2014-15 and 2015-16), there will be changes to some positions and movement within the Department. Once final, this reorganization will enable Government to better provide the skills, education and training opportunities that Newfoundlanders and Labradorians require to foster independence and sustain a prosperous future here in this province. The Department of Advanced Education and Skills' new organizational structure includes four branches:

1. **Workforce Development and Immigration**
   - The role of this branch is to ensure that labour market and immigration-related policies, programs, services and initiatives are strategically aligned to develop and deploy a highly trained and skilled workforce to meet evolving labour market demands in the province.
   - The branch is responsible for the administration of a broad range of client-focused, labour market-related programs designed to assist people in securing training and finding sustainable employment, and in helping employers meet significant labour supply challenges.
   - The branch administers the Provincial Nominee Program and a range of employment programs and supports to encourage labour market attachment.

2. **Post-Secondary Education**
   - The role of this branch is to support the delivery of post-secondary education in the province through Memorial University, College of the North Atlantic, and private training institutions.
   - The branch is also responsible for adult learning and literacy, the provision of financial assistance to post-secondary education students, and programs and supports for apprenticeship and trades certification.

3. **Corporate Services (including executive support)**
   - The role of this branch is to ensure the Department's overall functions for corporate policy and planning, service improvement and quality assurance, financial, and information management are achieved.
   - The branch also has responsibility for the Student Loan Corporation of Newfoundland and Labrador which manages the financial component of the Student Financial Assistance Program.

4. **Regional Service Delivery**
    - The role of this branch is to deliver the Department's programs and services throughout the province to a large and varied client base, including individuals who may need income and employment supports.
    - The branch also has responsibility for program and policy development as it relates to income and social supports.

As part of the reorganization, the Department established eight specialized units under the Regional Service Delivery Branch focused on the delivery of income supports as well as employment supports in 27 Employment Centres. These specialized units enhance service delivery for those we serve.

- **Applications Unit** in the Stephenville Office. This unit is the entry point to the Income Support Program. Staff are responsible for assessing client eligibility for Income Support, and other benefits and services under the Income Support Program; and for making referrals to Employment and Training Services, where appropriate.

- **Pay Authorization Unit** in the Clarenville Office. This unit is responsible for reviewing payments to clients before payments are issued and detecting potential fraud. In addition, this unit ensures compliance with regulations, policies and procedures as required under the *Financial Administration Act*.

- **Case Maintenance Units** in St. John's, Grand Falls-Windsor, and Corner Brook Offices. These units are responsible for the ongoing management of active Income Support cases, including file changes, suspensions, referrals for employment and training services, and for the provision of a variety of supplementary benefits, including vision care, medical transportation and special diets.

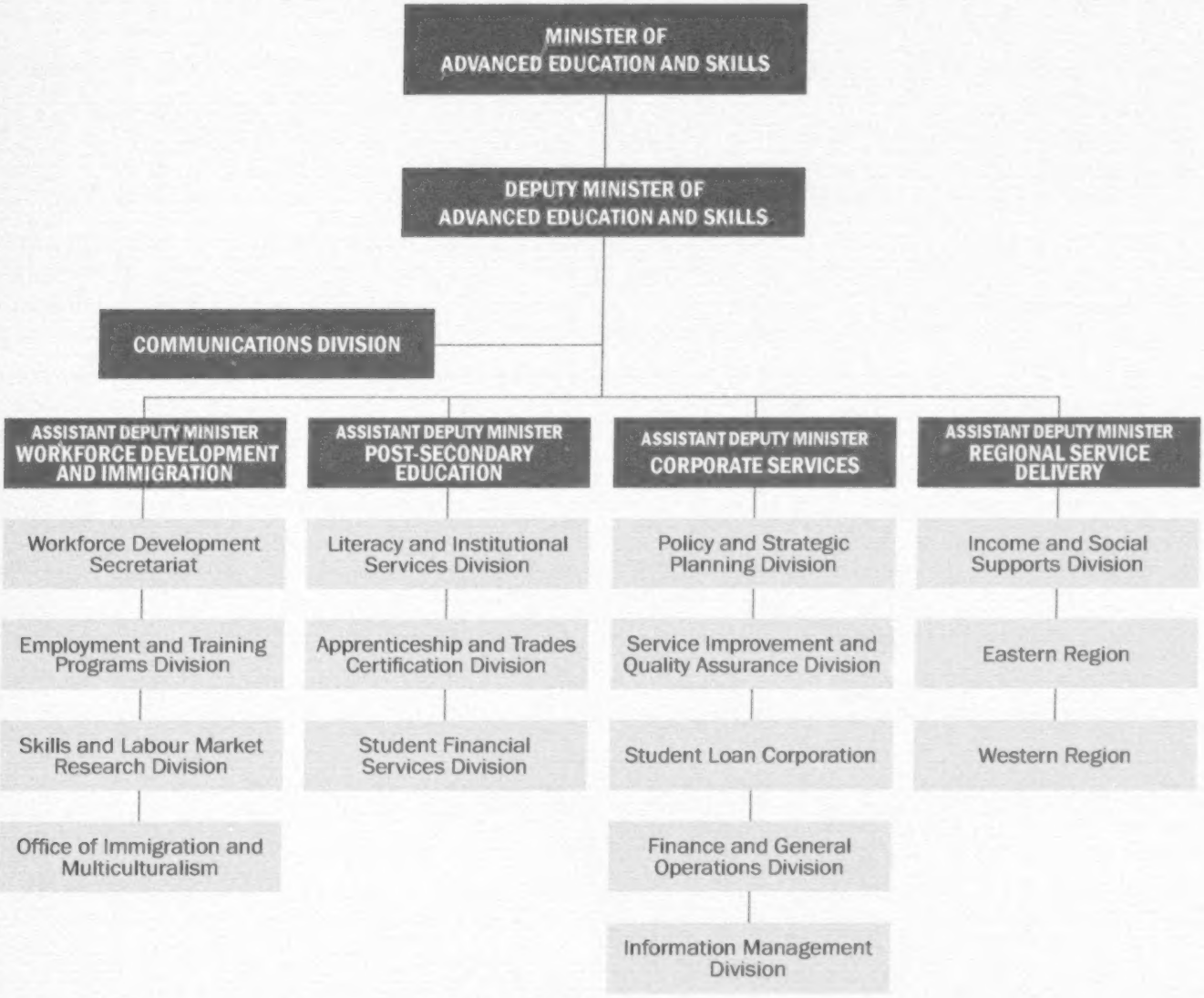
- **Mailback Unit** in the Marystown Office. This unit is responsible for assessing clients on a monthly basis whose financial situation varies. These clients are primarily working clients who must report earnings, but also include clients who are waiting to receive other benefits, such as Canada Pension and Employment Insurance.

- **Eligibility Assurance Unit** operates in Carbonear and St. John's Offices. These units are responsible for ensuring program integrity through the prevention and detection of potential client fraud. The Eligibility Assurance Unit also has six staff strategically located throughout the province to focus on timely investigations and, where necessary, prosecutions relating to fraud.

- In fiscal year 2015-16, the Department will establish a **Service Support Unit** in the Gander Office. This unit will address telephone and e-mail enquiries from Income and Employment Support clients as well as those seeking Training Services.

Department of Advanced Education and Skills Organizational Chart

The following chart provides a high-level overview of the Department's new organizational structure:


MINISTER OF ADVANCED EDUCATION AND SKILLS
DEPUTY MINISTER OF ADVANCED EDUCATION AND SKILLS
COMMUNICATIONS DIVISION
ASSISTANT DEPUTY MINISTER WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND IMMIGRATION
Workforce Development Secretariat
Employment and Training Programs Division
Skills and Labour Market Research Division
Office of Immigration and Multiculturalism
ASSISTANT DEPUTY MINISTER POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION
Literacy and Institutional Services Division
Apprenticeship and Trades Certification Division
Student Financial Services Division
ASSISTANT DEPUTY MINISTER CORPORATE SERVICES
Policy and Strategic Planning Division
Service Improvement and Quality Assurance Division
Student Loan Corporation
Finance and General Operations Division
Information Management Division
ASSISTANT DEPUTY MINISTER REGIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY
Income and Social Supports Division
Eastern Region
Western Region

Geographic Overview

For the delivery of income, employment and apprenticeship services, Newfoundland and Labrador is broken down into two regions, Eastern and Western (which includes Labrador).

Administration Offices are located in the following areas:

- St. John's – Kenmount Road (Metro Place)
- St. John's – Confederation Building
- Grand Falls-Windsor – (Queensway)

Student Financial Services are located in:

- St. John's – Coughlan College, Memorial University

The Eastern Region includes nine offices with Employment Centres in the following areas:

- Bell Island
- Bonavista
- Carbonear
- Clarenville (including Apprenticeship)
- Marystown
- Mount Pearl (including Apprenticeship)
- Placentia
- St. John's – Duckworth Street
- St. John's – Elizabeth Avenue

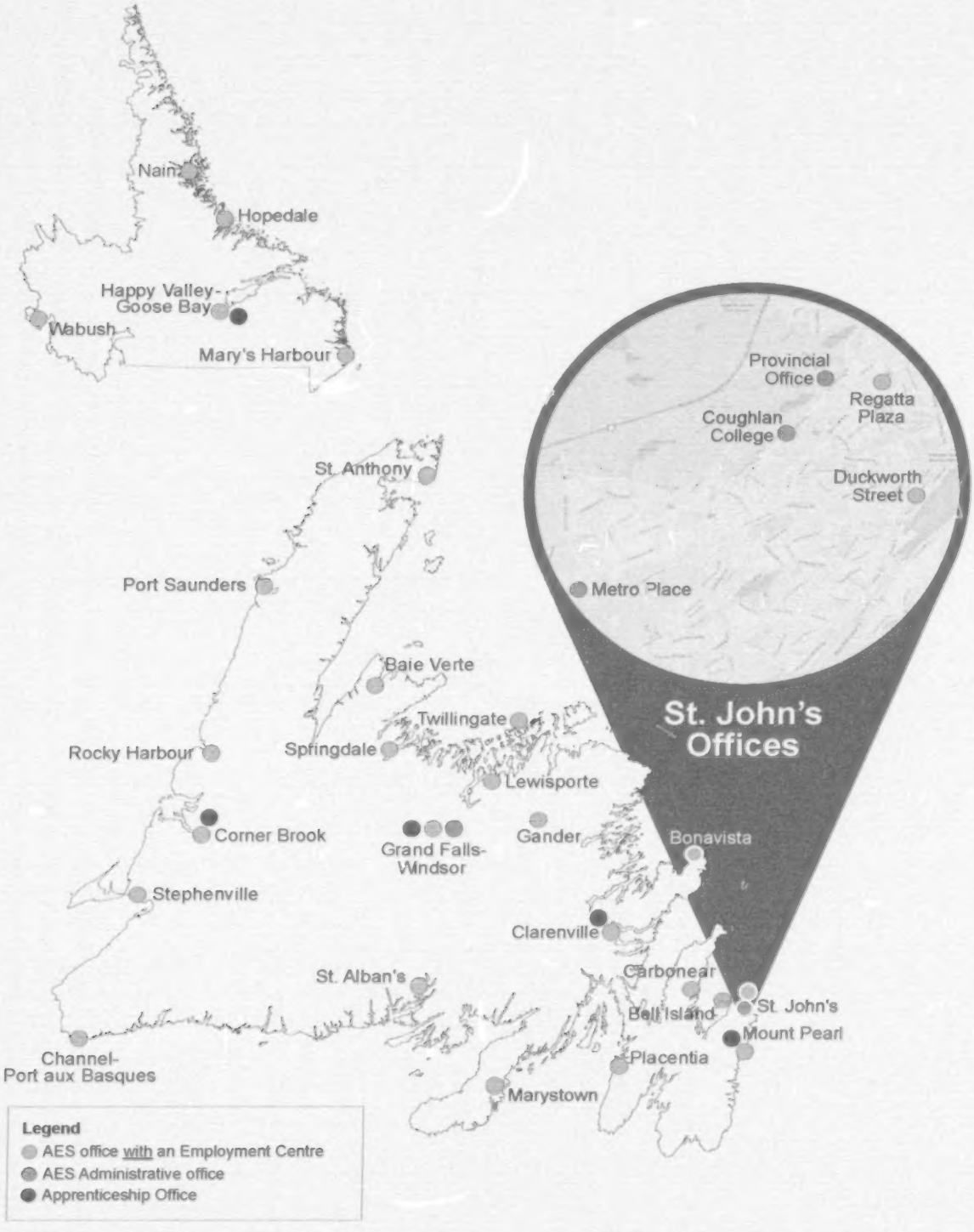
The Western Region includes 18 offices with Employment Centres in the following areas:

- Baie Verte
- Channel-Port aux Basques
- Corner Brook (including Apprenticeship)
- Gander
- Grand Falls-Windsor (including Apprenticeship)
- Happy Valley-Goose Bay (including Apprenticeship)
- Hopedale
- Lewisporte
- Mary's Harbour
- Nain
- Port Saunders
- Rocky Harbour
- Springdale
- St. Alban's
- St. Anthony
- Stephenville
- Twillingate
- Wabush

Contact information for offices of the Department of Advanced Education and Skills is contained in Appendix A.

Map of AES Offices by Community

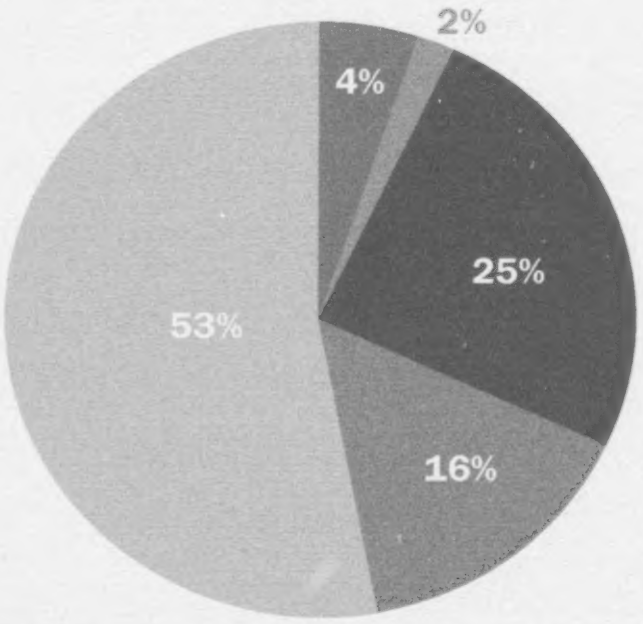
The following map illustrates the 26 communities where the offices of the Department of Advanced Education and Skills are located:



Expenditures

During the 2014-15 fiscal year, the Department's gross expenditures were $905.6 million. The following diagram shows the major expenditure categories:

Fiscal Year 2014-15 Gross Expenditures



Advanced Studies	$476.9M
Income and Social Development	$227.1M
Workforce Development and Immigration	$140.7M
Executive and Support Services	$40.1M
Service Delivery	$20.8M

At $476.9 million, the greatest expenditure in the Department was in support of Advanced Studies including $363.5 million for Memorial University, $84.0 million for College of the North Atlantic, $17.7 million for other post-secondary education initiatives, and $11.7 million for Apprenticeship. Income and Social Development accounted for $227.1 million, providing social and financial supports for individuals and families in our province. Workforce Development and Immigration accounted for $140.7 million, the largest component ($121.9 million) focused on providing employment and training benefits under the Labour Market Development Agreement, the Labour Market Agreement for Persons with Disabilities, as well as other employment development and training programs. A summary of expenditures and related revenue can be found on page 33 of this report.

SHARED COMMITMENTS

Much of the success the Department achieved during the past year resulted from collaboration and partnerships with external community-based organizations. Strategic partnerships contributed to success in the delivery of many essential programs and services in the province, including shelter and accommodations, employment interventions, training and re-training opportunities such as Adult Basic Education and literacy, as well as immigrant settlement and integration supports. As an illustrative example, the Department has provided funding to the Association for New Canadians (ANC) for a number of programs focusing on the settlement and integration of newcomers to the province, including the delivery of language classes to improve language proficiency and other services to support newcomers to sustain employment.

During the 2014-15 fiscal year, the Department of Advanced Education and Skills led a number of horizontal initiatives in partnership with other Government departments. These initiatives included approaches to promote immigration and multiculturalism, and the development of Government's Population Growth Strategy. As well, the Department contributed to horizontal initiatives led by other Provincial Government departments and entities. These initiatives included the Inclusion Action Plan, the Greening Government Action Plan and forthcoming plans for Poverty Reduction and Violence Prevention.

The Department has a shared commitment toward supporting a strong labour market and a skilled and educated population, as well as providing strong community and social supports. To fulfill commitments in these areas, partnerships are required with various municipal, Provincial and Federal Government departments and agencies; Aboriginal governments and organizations; business, industry, employers and labour organizations; post-secondary institutions and training providers; and community-based organizations. As an example, the Department worked closely with the Canadian Red Cross, the Salvation Army, the Nunatsiavut Government, Fire and Emergency Services NL and the municipality to provide drinking water to the community of Hopedale, Labrador, under the Emergency Social Services Program.

There are also strong connections with the eight entities that report to the Minister, to collectively fulfill commitments that fall under the common strategic direction of skilled, educated and employed citizens. A list of the entities that report to the Minister of Advanced Education and Skills is provided in Appendix B of this report.

HIGHLIGHTS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

During 2014-15, the Department of Advanced Education and Skills moved forward with its departmental reorganization to ensure Government programs and services are helping people secure independence, employment and prosperity. The former structure was the result of multiple programs being added to the mandate and several departmental realignments, which occurred over a period of 15 years. The new structure is comprised of four branches with 14 divisions. Service is delivered from 31 offices in two regions province-wide; Eastern Region and Western Region (which includes Labrador).

The new departmental organization structure enables staff to be responsive to the changing and evolving labour market, and better positions the Department to quickly adapt programs and services to meet the unique needs of citizens and communities.

A notable achievement is the continued investment from the Provincial Government to support an affordable, accessible and responsive post-secondary education system. Examples include continued investments in infrastructure for both Memorial University (MUN) and College of the North Atlantic (CNA); as well as continuing support for the tuition freeze at publicly-funded post-secondary institutions.

The Department continued with changes to strengthen the effectiveness of apprenticeship operations in the province. Financial support was also provided for groups under-represented in the labour market, such as women and Aboriginal apprentices, to train and gain work experience in a skilled trade. The Department also worked with stakeholders, holding skilled trades conferences to increase awareness of skilled trades as a career choice for women and youth.

The Department of Advanced Education and Skills continues to deliver a range of programs and training supports for individuals to obtain new skills and attach to employment, with funding from multiple federal-provincial agreements totaling in excess of $149.0 million. Employees are also quick on the ground to respond to the needs of workers affected by business closures or down-sizing, as illustrated in the Discussion of Results section for Strategic Issue 1.

Government remains steadfast in supporting some of the most vulnerable residents of the province, which was evidenced by a five per cent increase in the Income Support basic benefit rate in 2014. As well, investments continued to support approximately 2,000 students in Adult Basic Education programs throughout the province.

REPORT ON PERFORMANCE

ADDRESSING STRATEGIC ISSUES THROUGH THREE-YEAR GOALS AND 2014-15 OBJECTIVES

In the Department's 2014-17 Strategic Plan, three issues were identified as key Ministerial priorities:

1. Alignment of labour market supply and demand;
2. Responsiveness of post-secondary education and training; and,
3. Supports for people to participate in employment opportunities.

In developing strategic plans, departments create three-year goals to help achieve their mandates and address important issues facing the province. To achieve the goals of the Department of Advanced Education and Skills, an incremental approach over the three years of the plan is being taken, whereby annual objectives are identified for each fiscal year. At the end of the three years, it is envisioned that collectively, the annual objectives will have assisted the Department in reaching its multi-year goals.

This Annual Report highlights the Department's progress in achieving these three-year goals by reporting on its achievement of the 2014-15 performance indicators. Progress on each strategic issue is outlined in the subsequent pages, under each indicator throughout the document.

The new departmental organization structure enables staff to be responsive to the changing and evolving labour market, and better positions the Department to quickly adapt programs and services to meet the needs of citizens and communities.

Strategic Issue 1: Alignment of labour supply and demand

Despite softening economic conditions in 2014-15, the province continued to exhibit strength in many areas of the provincial economy, such as capital investment, retail sales and consumer spending. Employment levels in the province declined throughout 2014-15 as a result of the winding down of the construction phase of a number of major resource development projects. Even with this phased reduction, 2014 had the third highest annual employment level in the province since 1976. The 2014 unemployment rate was the second-lowest experienced in the province since 1976 (similarly, in terms of labour force, employment, unemployment rate, participation rate and employment rate, the past four years [2011-2014] have been the best four years for the province since 1976).

The period since late 2014 has demonstrated the volatility in commodity markets as evidenced by impacts on short-term oil industry investment plans, Provincial Government revenue and royalty streams. This market volatility has contributed to job losses in the mining and oil and gas sector, which has required the Department of Advanced Education and Skills to ensure a consistent and responsive approach to support impacted workers and businesses. Further, while some new major projects, such as Alderon's Kami Iron Ore Project and Husky Energy's West White Rose Expansion Project, have experienced delays, these projects are expected to resume once commodity prices rebound. A number of other projects already underway in the province will continue, which may lessen the impact of delays related to the start of new projects.

Demand for employees in the core economy remains strong, primarily as a result of attrition and retirements. Labour and skill shortages, and recruitment difficulties are being expressed by employers in several sectors of the economy and regions of the province, yet with pockets of unemployment, opportunities exist to help employers find needed workers within the province. For those cases where local workers cannot be matched to employer demand, the Department has supported businesses and other organizations in utilizing immigration to meet their operational requirements.

The alignment of labour supply and demand is critical to ensure the Department can support maximized growth in sectors of opportunity, drive an innovative, productive and knowledge-based economy, and ensure all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians benefit from those economic opportunities as they arise.

The Department is leading the Provincial Government's strategic direction to support skilled, educated and employed citizens. The Department has done so through the improved use of labour market information, tailoring of programs to respond to labour market needs, increasing employer access to skilled newcomers, and seeking out regional and sector-based labour market opportunities to incorporate into planning, training and skills development for individuals and employers.

In 2014-15, the Department of Advanced Education and Skills achieved its objective to commence initiatives to improve supports which promote alignment of labour market supply and demand. In particular, the sharing of sector-specific information between employers and potential employees succeeded in helping match supply with demand. The following table outlines specific results for the identified performance indicators.

Strategic Issue 1	
3-Year Goal:	By March 31, 2017, the Department of Advanced Education and Skills will have improved supports to promote the alignment of labour supply and demand.
Year 1 Objective (2014-15)	By March 31, 2015, the Department will have commenced initiatives to improve supports to promote the alignment of labour supply and demand.
Measure	Commenced initiatives to improve supports to promote the alignment of labour supply and demand.

Published 2014-15 Indicator	**2014-15 Actual Results**
1. Released a revised labour market supply and demand forecast	A revised labour market forecasting report, tentatively titled *Outlook 2025*, was completed. However, unanticipated delays with the information required for completion, prevented the forecast release in 2014-15. Much work was completed in 2014-15 to prepare a new forecast. The Department, in partnership with the Department of Finance: • Collected labour market supply and demand information; • Tested and developed a new labour market forecasting model; • Collected input on the proposed layout for a new forecast; and, • Entered data into the model. The draft labour market information model was discussed in collaboration with other provinces and territories that have a common goal to improve labour market information. Groups include: • A Senior Officials Steering Committee on labour market information through the Federal-Provincial-Territorial Forum of Labour Market Ministers; • A Working Group on labour market information under the Atlantic Workforce Partnership; • Bilateral activities with the Government of Canada; and, • Sector-specific working groups and initiatives focused on improving labour market information. This model will enable the Province to have timely, accessible and reliable labour market information. As a result of the methodology developed, Newfoundland and Labrador will be one of only a few jurisdictions in the country with its own labour market forecasting model. The creation of this model reduces the Provincial Government's dependency on others to prepare labour market information for the province. The forecast data will be used to align post-secondary education, training and programming investments with labour market requirements.

Strategic Issue 1 continued

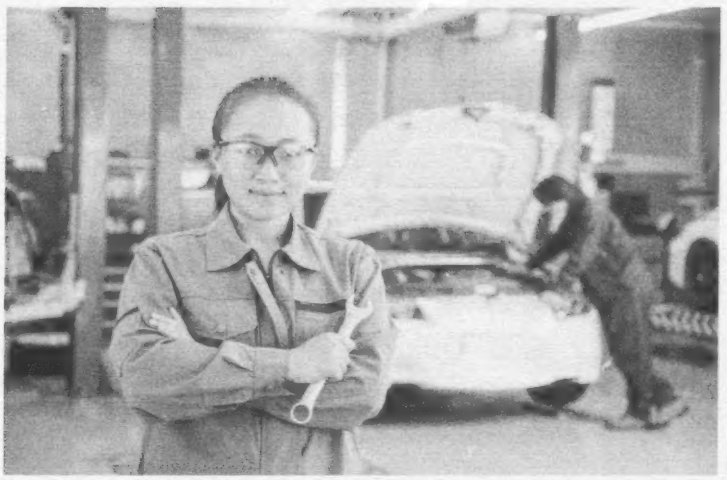
Published 2014-15 Indicator	2014-15 Actual Results
2. Increased immigration efforts to recruit skilled workers to meet employer demands	Immigration efforts were increased significantly in 2014-15 through several separate initiatives. Remaining competitive with other provinces, territories and countries is key to attracting skilled newcomers to immigrate to this province. In 2014-15, Government officials, including the Minister of Advanced Education and Skills, and employers from the province, attended four international recruitment events in England, Ireland, Belgium and France; an increase from the single international event attended in 2013-14. Participation at these immigration events has initiated interaction and communication with hundreds of potential immigrants to Newfoundland and Labrador. Changes in Federal Government policy in 2014-15 would have resulted in the loss of Temporary Foreign Workers (TFW) who provide valuable services to many employers and communities throughout the province. In response, the Department expedited applications under the Provincial Nominee Program (PNP) for impacted employees who otherwise would have not been able to renew their work permits, due to new Federal Government restrictions under the TFW Program. Through these efforts, approximately 90 additional immigrants were nominated under the PNP to help sustain businesses in Newfoundland and Labrador in 2014-15. Also, the Department worked with employers to collect data on pockets of economic growth in Newfoundland and Labrador with demonstrated skill shortages, in pursuit of an exemption from changes to the federal Temporary Foreign Worker Program for the longer term. Evidence was compiled and submitted to the Federal Government to demonstrate the need for an exemption. A final decision from Employment and Social Development Canada was not received during the 2014-15 fiscal year. In recent years, employers, businesses, organizations and others advocated strongly for an increase in Newfoundland and Labrador's base nomination target for immigrants under the PNP in order to help fulfill vacancies in many industry sectors. In 2014-15, the Department successfully secured an additional 200 nominations from the Federal Government. In addition, development work was completed for the new Express Entry category of economic immigration which resulted in an extra 550 nominations for this province. Therefore, the total number of nominations the Province can make in 2015 is now 1,050, up from 300 (a 250 per cent increase) from 2013-14. This nomination target does not include spouses, children and family members. Also noteworthy is that, when compared to all the other provinces and territories, Newfoundland and Labrador has had the largest increase to its base nomination target (67 per cent). Recent data indicates that increases in Newfoundland and Labrador's annual immigration numbers (Permanent

Strategic Issue 1 continued

Published 2014-15 Indicator	2014-15 Actual Results
2. Increased immigration efforts to recruit skilled workers to meet employer demands (continued)	Residents) are due to the growth in Provincial Nominees, who accounted for over 50 per cent of the record-high 896 (50.3 per cent male and 49.7 per cent female) immigrants that settled in the province during 2014. To help align labour supply and demand, in 2014-15, developmental work was completed for a new Immigration Action Plan, a key component in *Live Here • Work Here • Belong Here: A Population Growth Strategy for Newfoundland and Labrador 2015-2025*. Under the Strategy, there will be further opportunities to increase efforts to attract and retain newcomers to Newfoundland and Labrador.
3. Increased the promotion of employment opportunities in the province	As a result of the restructuring within the Department, the creation of 27 Employment Centres and the full integration of programs under the federally-funded labour market agreements, the Department is now able to enhance its work with employers and industry groups to promote employment opportunities. In 2014-15, the Department of Advanced Education and Skills increased its promotion of employment opportunities through a number of new initiatives: • Employment Centres have been created to provide both employers and job seekers with a variety of information, tools and resources on employment opportunities around the province. The JOBSinNL website www.jobsinnl.ca is an example of a high-profile tool used in Employment Centres. Just under 61,000 employment opportunities were advertised in 2014-15, up from the approximately 51,000 opportunities advertised in 2013-14. The website also promotes departmental program-specific opportunities such as summer employment and the new Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador Job Grant, both of which support improved employment opportunities. To advise key stakeholders of the services and resources available at Employment Centres, including sources of employment opportunities, the Department provided information to various community and industry groups including: ○ St. John's Board of Trade Event – Find and Create Great Employees; ○ Community, Career and Employment Partnership Project luncheon; ○ Newfoundland and Labrador Employers' Council Conference; ○ Réseau de développement économique et d'employabilité de Terre-Neuve-et-Labrador Bilingual Career Fair; ○ Presentation to the Newfoundland and Labrador Association of Community Business Development Corporations; ○ St. John's Board of Trade Business Development Summit; ○ Hospitality Newfoundland and Labrador Conference and Trade Show; and, ○ Newfoundland and Labrador Construction Association Annual Conference.

Strategic Issue 1 continued

Published 2014-15 Indicator	2014-15 Actual Results
3. Increased the promotion of employment opportunities in the province (continued)	• By hosting job fairs in 2014-15, the Department has been able to increase the promotion of employer-specific employment opportunities to job seekers. These job fairs are a new venture for Employment Centres. Examples include: ○ A Shoppers Drug Mart job fair was held at the Regatta Plaza Employment Centre in St. John's, where over 50 individuals attended. As part of this event, pre-screening of job applicants and basic interviews were held on-site, and those individuals who passed the pre-screening and basic interview processes were given formal interviews. Following the fair, six individuals were hired by Shoppers Drug Mart. ○ A Dynamic Air Shelters job fair was held at the Marystown Employment Centre, where more than 50 individuals participated. ○ The Department of Advanced Education and Skills also partnered with Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters NL to host a job fair for Terra Nova Footwear employees in the Carbonear Employment Centre, attended by 69 individuals (55 per cent female and 45 per cent male). • Since the launch of the Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador Job Grant on August 13, 2014, regional staff hosted employer information sessions for over 1,000 employers to promote training supports that will increase employment opportunities. By the end of March 2015, 41 projects, or 95 per cent of all projects for which employers applied, were approved, with a total number of 225 trainees (60 per cent males and 40 per cent females), for a funding investment of approximately $714,000.



Strategic Issue 1 continued

Published 2014-15 Indicator	2014-15 Actual Results
4. Released a Population Growth Strategy for Newfoundland and Labrador	Once responsibility for the Population Growth Strategy was transferred to the Department in June 2014, synergies were identified with the draft Workforce Development Action Plan and the need to integrate both approaches. This integration altered timelines for the finalization of materials and content. As a summary of the work completed in 2014-15, shortly after the transfer of the Population Growth Strategy to the Department, a *What We Heard Document* was released. This document detailed the input obtained from residents, employers, community groups and other stakeholders on ways to stabilize and grow the province's population. A series of meetings and discussions were also held within the Provincial Government to engage departments and agencies, as population stability and growth could best be achieved by working horizontally to ensure that policies, programs and decisions were aligned and integrated to affect positive change. The result is a multi-faceted Government strategy focusing on four key policy areas integral to population stability and growth: 1. Workforce Development; 2. Immigration; 3. Families; and, 4. Communities. The four key areas comprise individual action plans, forming the basis for the Population Growth Strategy for Newfoundland and Labrador. Each plan includes specific actions focused on one of the four policy areas. The Strategy also includes a detailed *Implementation Framework* which provides information on all of the policy actions Government will undertake to support population stability and growth, including timelines for implementation, and an annual report to support transparency and accountability.

Discussion of Results

Over the last fiscal year, the Department has undertaken a number of steps to improve supports to promote the alignment of labour supply and demand in the province. These steps include the creation of a new labour market forecasting model, significant increases in the nomination targets for the Provincial Nomination Program, enhanced efforts to reach out to job seekers throughout the province, and the development of a Population Growth Strategy. In addition, during 2014-15, the Department made progress in tailoring employment and training programs to respond to regional and sector labour market needs. Examples include:

- Industry Adjustment Initiatives – In the context of the idling and subsequent closure of Wabush Mines, the Department collaborated with municipalities and College of the North Atlantic in the Labrador West region to provide support and offer training programs for displaced workers in trades, such as Industrial Mechanic (Millwright), Industrial Electrician, and Welder.

  In addition, the Department provided employment supports to help displaced workers from a range of employers throughout the province, including:
  - Teck Resources' Duck Pond mine near Millertown;
  - Sykes Enterprises contact centre in Corner Brook;
  - Fusion BPO contact centre in Stephenville;
  - Terra Nova Shoes in Harbour Grace; and,
  - Retail and food service establishments, including Target and Future Shop.

  Throughout these responses, the Department collaborated with the relevant companies, employee organizations and municipal stakeholders to provide supports. Examples included: holding information sessions in collaboration with Service Canada on programs and services; career counselling; résumé writing; employment and wage subsidy programs; and job search assistance; along with access to localized labour market information and research to support re-training or new employment options.

- Responding to regional and sector labour needs, the Department worked with College of the North Atlantic, and the Department of Health and Community Services, to identify and fast-track applicants into an additional offering of the Home Support Worker/Personal Care Attendant program in Grand Falls-Windsor to provide expanded access to trained health professionals in the Central Region of the province.

- Under the Labrador Aboriginal Training Partnership, the Department co-funded a number of training programs designed to prepare Aboriginal workers for employment opportunities created by resource development in Labrador. Over 200 Aboriginal students (20.5 per cent of whom were female) were funded in 2014-15, and graduated from training programs, including: Rebar, Tower Steel, Scaffolding, Construction Craft Worker, Concrete Form Worker, and Commercial Driver. Additionally, 492 Aboriginal students (25.2 per cent of whom were female) completed training supplements including Safety Training, Union Awareness, Food Safety Certification, and Apprenticeship Preparation.

Going forward in 2015-16, the Department will focus on further improving supports to promote the alignment of labour supply and demand through a number of initiatives, such as:

- Working closely with employers who are seeking new recruits and matching job seekers with new opportunities;
- Working with post-secondary education and training institutions in the province to align public educational investments with supports that enable young Newfoundlanders and Labradorians to succeed in the labour market; and,
- Collaborating with stakeholders such as educational and training institutions, labour organizations, licensing and regulatory bodies, major project owners, large employers, employer organizations, chambers of commerce, boards of trade and industry associations to improve the collection of labour supply and demand information.

Looking Forward

In 2015-16 the objective, measure and indicators for Strategic Issue 1 are as follows:

2015-16 plans for Strategic Issue 1

Year 2 Objective:
By March 31, 2016, the Department will have continued initiatives to improve supports to promote the alignment of labour supply and demand.

Measure:
Continued initiatives to improve supports to promote the alignment of labour supply and demand.

Indicators of Success:
1. Provided labour market information and tools to employers, individuals and institutions;
2. Identified opportunities to tailor programs to respond to labour market demands;
3. Developed tools to increase employer access to skilled immigrants; and,
4. Identified ways to integrate regional labour market opportunities into program offerings.

Strategic Issue 2: Responsiveness of post-secondary education and training

In today's global community, education is vital for success. A responsive post-secondary education system that prepares students for employment and adjusts to labour market needs is essential. Moreover, building a strong, educated workforce is key to encouraging a robust economy and sustaining population growth.

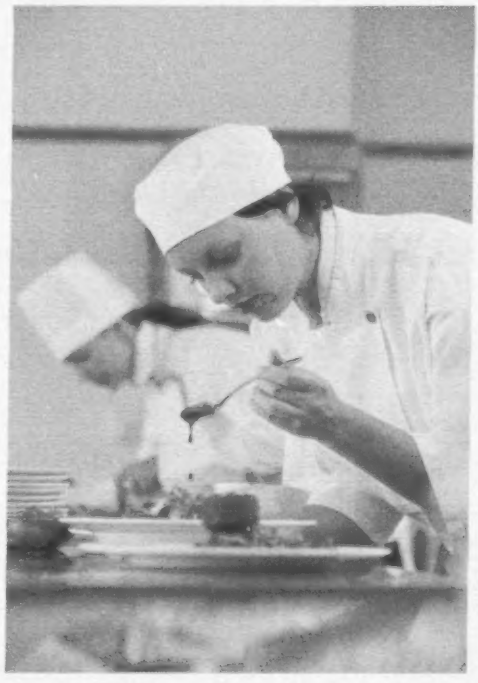
The Department is addressing the Provincial Government's strategic direction to support skilled, educated and employed citizens. It is doing so through the strengthening of apprenticeship operations and aligning post-secondary education and training to be more responsive to the labour market, and by improving the efficiency and accountability in the provincial Student Financial Assistance Program.

The Provincial Government remains committed to affordable education. Ongoing investments to reduce student debt supports student choices to pursue post-secondary education in Newfoundland and Labrador. To ensure the higher education system is aligned well with labour market outcomes, post-secondary institutions continually review curriculum to ensure it meets labour market needs. Work included revising the approach to trades education and working with College of the North Atlantic (CNA) to develop a new strategic vision and direction that is opportunity and industry-driven. The Department of Advanced Education and Skills is supporting CNA as it creates centres of excellence in specific disciplines, ensuring that CNA maximizes its potential. Government provided CNA with $1.5 million for programs that are in demand. With this funding, CNA was able to offer extra sections in key programs, including Construction/Industrial Electrician, Power-line Technician, Automotive Service Technician, Machinist, Welder, Sheet Metal Worker, Safety Engineering, Heavy Equipment Operator, Power Engineering, Cook, Business Administration, and Non-destructive Testing.

Through the *CareerSearch* publication of graduate outcomes, the Department continues to inform students, parents and employers how graduates perform after graduation from specific programs.

Public post-secondary institutions also continued to identify and implement efficiencies to ensure that their programming and operations meet the needs of students and employers.

The following outlines specific results for the identified performance indicators.



Strategic Issue 2

3-Year Goal:	By March 31, 2017, the Department of Advanced Education and Skills will have enabled provincial post-secondary education and training to become more responsive to labour market demands.
Year 1 Objective (2014-15)	By March 31, 2015, the Department will have commenced initiatives to enable provincial post-secondary education and training to become more responsive to labour market demands.
Measure	Commenced initiatives to enable provincial post-secondary education and training to become more responsive to labour market demands.

Published 2014-15 Indicator	**2014-15 Actual Results**
1. Reviewed phased-in approaches from MUN and CNA to operationalize the efficiency reviews	As part of Budget 2013, Memorial University (MUN) and CNA were mandated to conduct efficiency reviews of operations as a part of the Provincial Government's ten-year sustainability plan. The Department met with Board chairs and senior executives of both institutions to apprise and advise on the commitment and how best to proceed. The Department collaborated with both MUN and CNA as each organization considered work plans to achieve results and implement efficiencies. Assessments, methodologies, reviews and proposals have been phased-in by the institutions with Departmental support over last two years, to create a strategic direction going forward. By having operational processes that are more lean and cost-effective, resources can be freed up for the institutions to become more flexible to better meet labour market demand within Newfoundland and Labrador. As of March 31, 2015, MUN had implemented 22 efficiency review initiatives, resulting in annualized cost-savings of more than $5.2 million. Examples of efficiencies found include: operational changes at the Marine Institute's Offshore Safety and Survival Centre; eliminating credit card convenience fees; and, streamlining convocation by moving to more on-line publications, reducing hosting and material costs, and consolidating media monitoring services. MUN also developed an efficiency review website to update the university community and public with respect to details on the projects identified for savings and their status. The website can be viewed at: www.mun.ca/operationsbudgetreview.

Strategic Issue 2 continued

Published 2014-15 Indicator	2014-15 Actual Results
1. Reviewed phased-in approaches from MUN and CNA to operationalize the efficiency reviews (continued)	CNA's efficiency review targeted revenue generation, maintaining constant overall enrolment rates, and implementing a new campus administration model. As of March 31, 2015, CNA identified over $5 million in annualized efficiencies through a college-wide review of programming, with a focus on low-enrolment and high-demand programs, and assessed the corporate and campus leadership structure. Changes implemented include: maintaining constant overall enrolment rates; increasing enrolments in industrial trades, engineering and health sciences; creating extra session offerings to respond to labour market needs; and eliminating low-enrolment offerings.
2. Introduced and maintained financial solutions to remove barriers to participation in post-secondary education	In 2014-15, the Department committed $14.7 million over two years to eliminate provincial student loans in favour of full, up-front, non-repayable grants. The Province will be the first and only jurisdiction in Canada to have a full up-front grant system. Depending on assessed need, students may receive up to $140 per week of study in provincial loans and grants. During 2014-15, the grant portion of student aid increased by $20 as the loan portion decreased by $20, compared with 2013-14.

	Grant	Loan	Total
2013-14	$80	$60	$140/week
2014-15	$100	$40	$140/week

In 2014-15, the Provincial Government allocated a total of $52.7 million to support maintaining the tuition freeze at MUN and CNA, allowing public post-secondary institutions to maintain one of the lowest tuition rates nationally.

These two examples represent the Department's commitment to ensuring students are less burdened by student debt upon graduation. Ensuring that post-secondary education is more responsive to students will, in turn, support graduation and a connection to the province while obtaining education, which will increase the likelihood of graduates remaining in the province to seek employment.

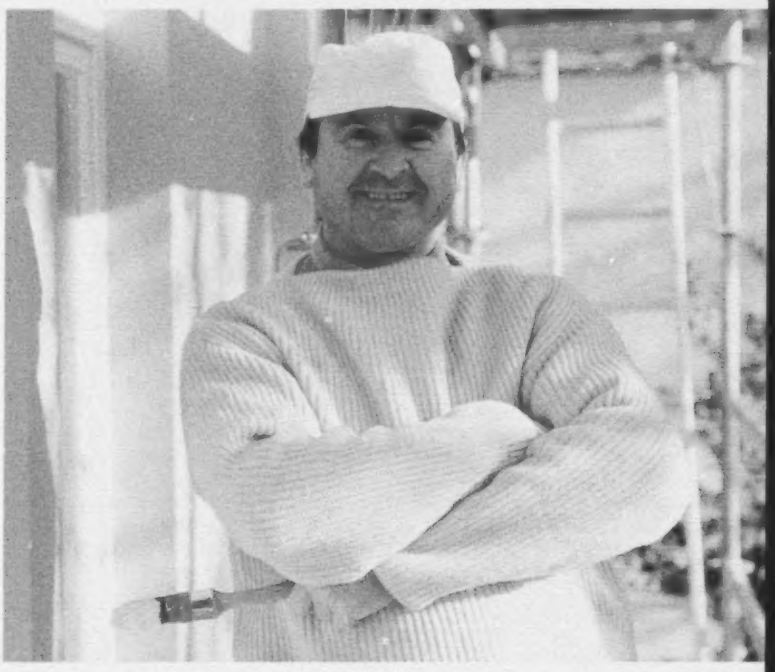
Strategic Issue 2 continued

Published 2014-15 Indicator	2014-15 Actual Results
3. Improved efficiency and responsiveness of provincial apprenticeship operations	The Department undertook a number of initiatives in 2014-15 to improve apprenticeship efficiency and responsiveness. Examples include: • Co-locating the five regional apprenticeship offices within existing Employment Centres throughout the province to provide apprentices with access to the full continuum of employment and training services. Employment counsellors and apprenticeship staff can now work collaboratively to address the employment and training needs of apprentices including providing labour market information, offering assistance with résumé writing and job search, and providing information on the various apprenticeship grants available. • Enhancing measures to assess and recognize an apprentice's level of training status when transferring from another Canadian jurisdiction to Newfoundland and Labrador. As a result, apprentices are now eligible to receive credit for all in-school training, up to and including their current block level when they pass the Newfoundland and Labrador block exam, at that level. • Identifying and preparing renewal initiatives unique to Newfoundland and Labrador for the next fiscal year that will improve access to logbooks, simplify the apprenticeship process, expand supports to youth apprentices, and pilot new approaches to block training. These initiatives are part of the Department's broader plan to renew the apprenticeship program.

Discussion of Results

In addition to work outlined on the three previous annual indicators, additional progress was realized and changes were made to improve accountability and increase fiscal responsibility as a result of transitioning to a predominantly grant-based program of provincial student aid. The Department instituted a process for recovering grants awarded to students who are no longer eligible. If a student drops out of post-secondary studies, or drops back to an ineligible course load-size, this changes the eligibility status for a grant. Given that grants are provided at the beginning of a school year, mechanisms were needed to recover grants from students who were no longer eligible. Prior to 2014-15, legislative authority did not exist to allow the Department to recover these funds. An analysis in March 2015 revealed that a total of approximately $26,000 in grant funding was issued to students who subsequently withdrew. As a result of the legislative change, these funds can now be converted to a repayable Newfoundland and Labrador student loan.

In conclusion, improving the affordability of post-secondary education and training and re-tooling the apprenticeship system will ensure that education and training is more responsive to labour market demands. As the province's economy approaches a second peak in employment demand towards the end of the decade, continuing to ensure the post-secondary system generally, and the apprenticeship system specifically is responsive to employers, is a key priority for the Department of Advanced Education and Skills moving forward. As an example, the implementation plan for apprenticeship renewal initiatives to be rolled out during the 2015-16 fiscal year, will ensure individuals employed in the trades throughout Newfoundland and Labrador are able to continue to find employment, and major project owners are able to continue to secure the right people with the right skills.



Continuing to ensure the apprenticeship system is responsive to employers is a key priority for the Department of Advanced Education and Skills.

Looking Forward

In 2015-16 the objective, the measure and the indicators for Strategic Issue 2 are as follows:

2015-16 plans for Strategic Issue 2

Year 2 Objective:

By March 31, 2016, the Department will have continued initiatives to enable provincial post-secondary education and training to become more responsive to labour market demands.

Measure:

Continued initiatives to enable provincial post-secondary education and training to become more responsive to labour market demands.

Indicators of Success:

1. Renewed aspects of provincial apprenticeship operations;
2. Provided mechanisms to support an innovative and responsive post-secondary education and training system; and,
3. Introduced further efficiencies into the Student Financial Assistance Program.

Strategic Issue 3: Supports for people to participate in employment opportunities

The Department of Advanced Education and Skills continues to enhance services and improve coordination of supports for thousands of citizens across the province. In order to ensure that all efforts are deployed to support individuals to participate in employment, several enhancements have been made and more will continue in the ensuing years. A key focus of Issue 3 is on individuals who are under-represented in the labour market such as older workers, persons with disabilities, Aboriginal people or individuals receiving Income Support. As examples, over $13 million has been spent on the Targeted Initiative for Older Workers, supporting over 750 individuals with training and work experience since 2008-09; over $117 million has been spent of the Labour Market Development Agreement for Persons with Disabilities to participate in education training and employment since 2008-09; as well as a suite of employment incentives for Income Support recipients such as the overlapping of benefits and earnings for 30 days, as well as a job start allowance.

In addition, the Department in partnership with community agencies, provided a range of services and supports to meet basic needs; helped educate citizens; and supported people to move into, and sustain employment. A key focus is to enhance supports and improve coordination along the full spectrum of services offered by the Department. In keeping with the mission, the Department is striving to streamline delivery, increase access and improve the timeliness of services.

Fundamental to supporting Newfoundlanders and Labradorians is the implementation of initiatives to promote adult literacy and essential skills development, which in turn, help people prepare for employment opportunities and support career choices. The Department is addressing the Provincial Government's strategic direction to support skilled, educated and employed citizens. It does so by improving supports for people, including providing literacy supports that increase the skill levels of individuals and help meet labour market demand.

In 2014-15, the Department achieved its objective to initiate activities to improve supports for people to participate in employment opportunities. In particular, the Department improved its support for individuals looking for work and made service delivery improvements to increase access to opportunities.

On a go-forward basis, the Department will continue to focus on reducing barriers to employment by targeting populations such as youth, single parents, and single individuals. This targeted approach will enable the Department to design specific responses tailored to individual needs. In 2014-15, the Department commenced a Service Improvement Initiative which works toward improving timeliness, access, service experience and outcomes. The Department will engage clients, community partners, employers and departmental staff in the realignment and improvement of services to clients.

The following table outlines specific results for the identified performance indicators.

Strategic Issue 3	
3-Year Goal:	By March 31, 2017, the Department of Advanced Education and Skills will have improved supports for people to participate in employment opportunities.
Year 1 Objective (2014-15)	By March 31, 2015, the Department will have initiated activities that improve supports for people to participate in employment opportunities.
Measure	Initiated activities to improve supports for people.

Published 2014-15 Indicator	**2014-15 Actual Results**
1. Commenced an incremental approach to establishing service standards	The Department of Advanced Education and Skills offers a range of programs and supports to various client groups around the province to encourage active employment, which will lead to a skilled and sustainable workforce. While the Department also partners with a host of community-based organizations around the province to support program delivery, the primary programs delivered by Departmental employees include the provision of income supports, employment planning, apprenticeship and trade certification, immigration services and financial support for post-secondary education. In order to achieve the goal of improving supports for people to participate in employment in the next three years, the Department began a review of five service areas with a goal of improving access and timeliness of services. The establishment of a service standard is seen as an initial step in improving how programs are delivered. A new Division of Service Improvement and Quality Assurance was established in 2014-15, as a result of the Department's reorganization. This new Division commenced consultations with employees of the Income Support and Employment and Training Divisions, to define priority indicators and baseline measures. Work also commenced with divisions to analyze business and work flow processes and to develop service improvement plans. Reporting processes and quality assurance measures were identified. The division also commenced work to define standards of practice and data was collected and analyzed to develop baseline measures. All industrial training apprenticeship services were also reviewed to determine suitability for establishing services standards. This review included an examination of how apprenticeship logbooks were issued, the timing of training schedules released to support apprentices with their ongoing learning, and the process for updating the files of active apprentices with current transcripts, which support pay increases. Several efficiencies were identified for implementation in the 2015-16 fiscal year to improve the quality of service.

Strategic Issue 3 continued

Published 2014-15 Indicator	2014-15 Actual Results
1. Commenced an incremental approach to establishing service standards (continued)	The application process for Student Financial Assistance and the associated service standards were also reviewed. Following this assessment, it was determined that approximately 98 per cent of applications were processed within the ten business day service standard. While the standard of ten business days was confirmed as an appropriate standard, the review provided insight into modifications to the division's work flow model. Modifications such as identifying the exact date of an application review, which allows staff to provide students with a deadline to have submitted the necessary eligibility information, resulted in only 1.8 per cent (106 of 8,905) of applications falling outside of the timeline for assessment. This resulted in fewer delays in students receiving their funding in time for college or university. The inquiry e-mail account within the Office of Immigration and Multiculturalism was assessed for the service response time. As a result of this review, the standard of a new 24-hour turnaround was established for inquiries. The Office also developed and introduced a quality assurance checklist for new Provincial Nominee Program applications, to ensure completeness of applications and timely review, which will expedite processing.
2. Reviewed the Income Support Program to guide the development of solutions for individuals that are unable to attach to the work force	The Department undertook a multi-pronged approach as part of its review of the Income Support Program in 2014-15: • A Canada-wide jurisdictional review provided information on the different approaches taken to serving individuals with barriers to labour market attachment, specifically those with disabilities. Unlike many other jurisdictions, Newfoundland and Labrador does not provide a higher benefit for individuals with disabilities. However, the regular benefit levels available to all income support recipients are comparable to the higher benefit levels in most other provinces for individuals with disabilities. Newfoundland and Labrador is focused on providing consistent benefit levels for all recipients, while at the same time providing programs and services that address barriers to employment. Other provinces report increasing income support caseloads, especially for persons with disabilities, whereas, Newfoundland and Labrador continues to see a general downward trend in the entire caseload.

Strategic Issue 3 continued

Published 2014-15 Indicator	2014-15 Actual Results
2. Reviewed the Income Support Program to guide the development of solutions for individuals that are unable to attach to the work force (continued)	• To inform a better understanding of the barriers that may prevent income support clients from attaching to the labour market, the Department undertook a detailed file review in Labrador and the North East Avalon. In Labrador, because of the relatively small caseload (946 cases - 51 per cent female and 49 per cent male) it was possible to review the entire caseload. As a result of the findings of the review, the Department was able to develop targeted solutions to labour market attachment. Using a similar assessment model, staff initiated an analysis of approximately 1,600 (38 per cent female and 62 percent male) income support files in the North East Avalon for individuals that are single, and living with relatives. This group was selected because of their relative housing stability and lower benefit levels, which may result in fewer barriers to employment. As a result of the file reviews, the Department is developing an interdisciplinary model to address a range of barriers to employment for income support clients.
3. Oversaw the development of an Adult Literacy and Essential Skills Plan	Considerable work took place on the Adult Literacy and Essential Skills Plan during 2014-15. This included discussions with other provinces and territories about their best practices and innovations; as well as internal Government discussions to ensure potential initiatives are aligned with current and upcoming provincial strategies. It has been determined that the Plan will need new approaches to reach more adults, respond to the unique needs of learners in the province, and become more integrated with existing programs and services. These directions will result in a plan that is more focused on resources that support literacy and essential skills including self-assisted tools, more opportunities to achieve high school equivalency, as well as new and innovative practices that will make the programs and services more efficient and responsive in order to better support citizens to be more active in the workforce. The Department is now focusing its efforts on follow-up work to finalize the Plan during 2015-16.

Discussion of Results

In addition to work on the three previous annual indicators, progress was also realized and changes were made in programs and services to increase access to opportunities that exist in the province. As examples, the following assessments and service delivery improvements were implemented:

- Adult Basic Education (ABE) services were improved and offered in 40 locations around the province through a variety of providers. As a result of transitioning ABE services to other service providers, capacity has increased in some locations that previously had wait-lists, thereby resulting in reduced or eliminated wait times for new clients requiring academic upgrading. A new monitoring approach was also introduced at all ABE delivery sites which includes monthly reporting of client attendance and academic progression resulting in earlier interventions for clients who may require them;

- A comprehensive assessment of the administrative processes involved in the delivery of Income Support services was undertaken, which identified the need to focus on ensuring consistency in the application of policies and procedures. As such, delivery functions were combined to create efficiencies. The Stephenville office now focusses on processing telephone applications for the province; the Clarenville office is dedicated to improving the audit functions of pay authorization for income support payments; the Marystown office is dedicated to supporting clients for which Income Support supplements other income sources; and, an Eligibility Assurance Unit in the Carbonear and St. John's offices is responsible for detecting and preventing fraud, and ensuring that clients are receiving the benefits and services to which they are entitled. Through the reorganization, the Department was able to align income support administrative functions to maintain departmental resources in rural areas of the province. In 2015-16, the transition to specialized delivery units will be complete.

- The Sector Skills Training Program is a partnership between employers, training providers and the Department. The program is designed to meet the labour needs of specific industry sectors. The Sector Skills Program involves seven weeks of pre-employment, in-class training followed by four weeks of on-the-job work experience. During 2014-15, the program was offered in Gander, Carbonear, St. John's, Happy Valley-Goose Bay, Corner Brook and Grand Falls-Windsor. Approximately 115 participants (53 percent female and 47 per cent male) received training and work experience in such sectors as food services, retail sales, accommodations, travel, construction, building maintenance and information services. The second delivery of this program was modified to better support labour market attachment. The number of weeks of in-class training was increased; the curriculum was improved and standardized; a wage subsidy was provided to employers during the on-the-job training portion of the program; and when the participants went on full salary with an employer, incentives to work were included to support transition away from the Income Support Program into full employment. A total of 56 per cent of the participants in the program successfully attached to the labour market.

Looking Forward

In 2015-16 the objective, the measure and the indicators for Strategic Issue 3 are as follows:

2015-16 Plans for Strategic Issue 3

Year 2 Objective:

By March 31, 2016, the Department will have continued initiatives that improve supports for people to participate in employment opportunities.

Measure:

Continued initiatives that improve supports for people to participate in employment opportunities.

Indicators of Success:

1. Modified how program interventions are delivered to individuals, including those having difficulty attaching to the labour market;
2. Implemented service delivery improvements in select areas; and,
3. Enhanced staffing skills and abilities in Employment Centres to support the uptake of adult literacy programming.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

During 2015-16, the Department will focus on implementing the second year of its three-year strategic plan. Key to that effort is the ongoing process of improving how the Department supports individuals to participate in the provincial economy and how the Department works with its partners to better align labour market supply with labour market needs. In particular, the Department of Advanced Education and Skills is striving to support its post-secondary education and training partners to be more responsive to the labour needs of the communities and regions of the province.

In the longer term, responding to the province's significant population shift which is attributed to an aging population (e.g. a high number of retirees), out-migration in previous years, low birth rates and fewer labour market entrants (e.g. high school graduates) will be a significant challenge given the Department's mandate. Seeking new partners, finding ways to do business differently and being innovative in meeting the needs of citizens will provide guidance in moving forward. A key priority and opportunity in the coming years will be to implement the action items in the Population Growth Strategy and the four corresponding action plans.

The Department is facing a number of challenges in the coming year including:

- Continuing to deliver fiscally prudent programs and services, with minimal disruption to staff and clients;
- Helping to match labour supply with demand in the current economic environment; and,
- Working with stakeholders to ensure all can take advantage of the opportunities that exist in the province.

At the same time, the Department of Advanced Education and Skills has identified a number of opportunities that will help to address its strategic goals and objectives. During 2015-16, the Department will:

- Complete the process of eliminating provincial student loans in favour of up front grants;
- Introduce non-repayable grants for part-time students studying at post-secondary institutions in the province;
- Reactivate the Council on Higher Education;
- Renew provincial apprenticeship operations to make them more responsive;
- Harmonize select skilled trades with the Atlantic provinces;
- Provide new labour market information tools to employers and individuals;
- Tailor departmental programs to respond to labour market demands;
- Develop tools to increase employer access to skilled immigrants; and
- Implement service delivery improvements in select areas.

In summary, as the Department moves forward with addressing its strategic issues in the next two years, strategic partnerships will yield results in improving the alignment of labour market supply and demand; creating a more responsive post-secondary education and training system; and, improving supports for people to participate in employment opportunities.

Financial Statements

Summary of Expenditure and Related Revenue for the Year Ended March 31, 2015 (unaudited)

	Actual Expenditure $	Amended Budget $	Original Budget $
Executive and Support Services			
Minister's Office	404,100	414,400	348,200
Executive Support	1,132,900	1,146,500	1,202,700
Administrative Support	6,387,400	6,453,000	6,048,800
Program Development & Planning	1,857,200	1,995,800	2,129,500
NL Student Loans Program	30,297,900	30,325,500	30,325,500
Service Delivery			
Client Services	20,818,800	20,891,800	19,940,000
Income and Social Development			
Income Assistance	226,337,700	229,765,300	231,591,000
National Child Benefit Reinvestment	440,200	600,000	600,000
Mother/Baby Nutrition Supplement	278,000	325,000	385,000
Workforce Development and Immigration			
Workforce Development and Productivity Secretariat	704,100	715,800	897,800
Employment and Training Programs	1,613,600	1,617,200	1,970,400
Employment Development Programs	8,808,200	10,001,400	10,001,400
Labour Market Development Agreements Project	102,104,600	103,556,700	101,672,600
Canada/NL Job Fund Agreement	5,395,700	5,417,000	4,871,000
Labour Market Adjustment Programs	1,120,700	1,283,300	1,283,300
Employment Assistance Program for Persons with Disabilities	10,990,600	11,352,200	11,352,200
Youth Services	7,906,700	8,867,100	8,867,100
Skills and Labour Market Research	815,800	897,900	991,800
Office of Immigration and Multiculturalism	915,700	994,600	1,132,400
Case Management System Development	330,800	332,000	200,000
Advanced Studies			
Apprenticeship and Trades Certification	11,725,500	13,367,000	13,670,200
Literacy and Institutional Services	5,670,900	6,125,400	6,116,300
Atlantic Veterinary College	1,162,700	1,238,800	1,238,800
Memorial University - Operations	345,720,600	345,720,800	339,819,000
Memorial University - Physical Plant & Equipment	17,800,000	19,389,800	19,389,800
College of the North Atlantic - Operations	80,466,000	81,890,000	85,543,800
College of the North Atlantic - Physical Plant and Equipment	3,526,800	5,500,000	5,500,000

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS CONTINUED	Actual Expenditure $	Amended Budget $	Original Budget $
Student Financial Services - Administration	1,632,600	1,677,500	1,652,400
Scholarships	116,700	123,800	123,800
Training Programs	9,126,700	9,500,000	7,000,000
Total Gross Expenditures	**905,609,200**	**921,485,600**	**915,864,800**
Total Revenue	**(146,738,500)**	**(156,103,800)**	**(156,103,800)**
Total Net Expenditures	**758,659,400**	**776,268,800**	**759,761,000**

Branch Totals	
Executive and Support	40,079,500
Service Delivery	20,818,800
Income and Social Development	227,055,900
Workforce Development and Immigration	140,706,500
Advanced Studies	476,948,500
TOTAL DEPARTMENT GROSS EXPENDITURES	**905,609,200**

Expenditure and revenue figures are unaudited and based on public information from the Report on the Program Expenditures and Revenues of the Consolidated Revenue Fund for the year ended March 31, 2015. Audited financial statements are a requirement at the government level and are made public through the Public Accounts process; however, the Department of Advanced Education and Skills is not required to provide a separate audited financial statement.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A - Contact Information

Further information about the services offered by the Department of Advanced Education and Skills may be obtained from the Department's web site at www.aes.gov.nl.ca or via Canada Post at the Department of Advanced Education and Skills – Confederation Building, 3rd Floor, West Block, P.O. Box 8700, St. John's, NL, A1B 4J6; Telephone: (709) 729-2480.

To access **career, employment and labour market information**, please call the Labour Market and Career Information Hotline at 1-800-563-6600, in St. John's (709) 729-6600; TTY: 1-877-292-4205; or, visit www.aes.gov.nl.ca/lmi.html.

For in-person employment assistance, please visit one of the following **Employment Centres around the province** that can be found at: http://www.aes.gov.nl.ca/career/employment_centres.pdf.

To access the **immigration and multiculturalism** information, please call (709) 729-6607 or visit www.nlimmigration.ca.

To access **Student Aid Services**, please call the Main Office toll free at 1-888-657-0800; St. John's (709)729-5849; or, visit www.aes.gov.nl.ca/studentaid.

To access **Apprenticeship and Certification Services**, please call the Main Office toll free at 1-877-771-3737; St. John's (709)729-2729; Clarenville (709) 466-3982; Grand Falls-Windsor (709) 292-4215; Corner Brook (709) 637-2366; Happy Valley–Goose Bay (709) 896-6348.

To access Adult Basic Education and **adult literacy services**, please call (709)729-6191.

Access to Information and Protection of Privacy:

For information regarding an access to information request or to inquire about the collection or use of your personal information, please contact the departmental Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Coordinator at (709) 729-4276.

Income Support Services:

- All Income Support offices on the Avalon peninsula can be reached at (709)729-7888 or toll free at: 1-877-729-7888; TTY: 1-877-292-4205.
- All Income Support offices in Central Newfoundland can be reached toll free at: 1-888-632-4555; TTY: 1-877-292-4205.
- All Income Support offices in Western Newfoundland can be reached toll free at: 1-866-417-4753; TTY: 1-877-292-4205.
- All offices in Labrador can be reached toll free at: 1-888-773-9311; TTY 1-877-292-4205.

APPENDIX B: Public Entities

Public Entities

The following public entities reported through the Minister of Advanced Education and Skills, and prepared separate annual performance reports in 2014-15:

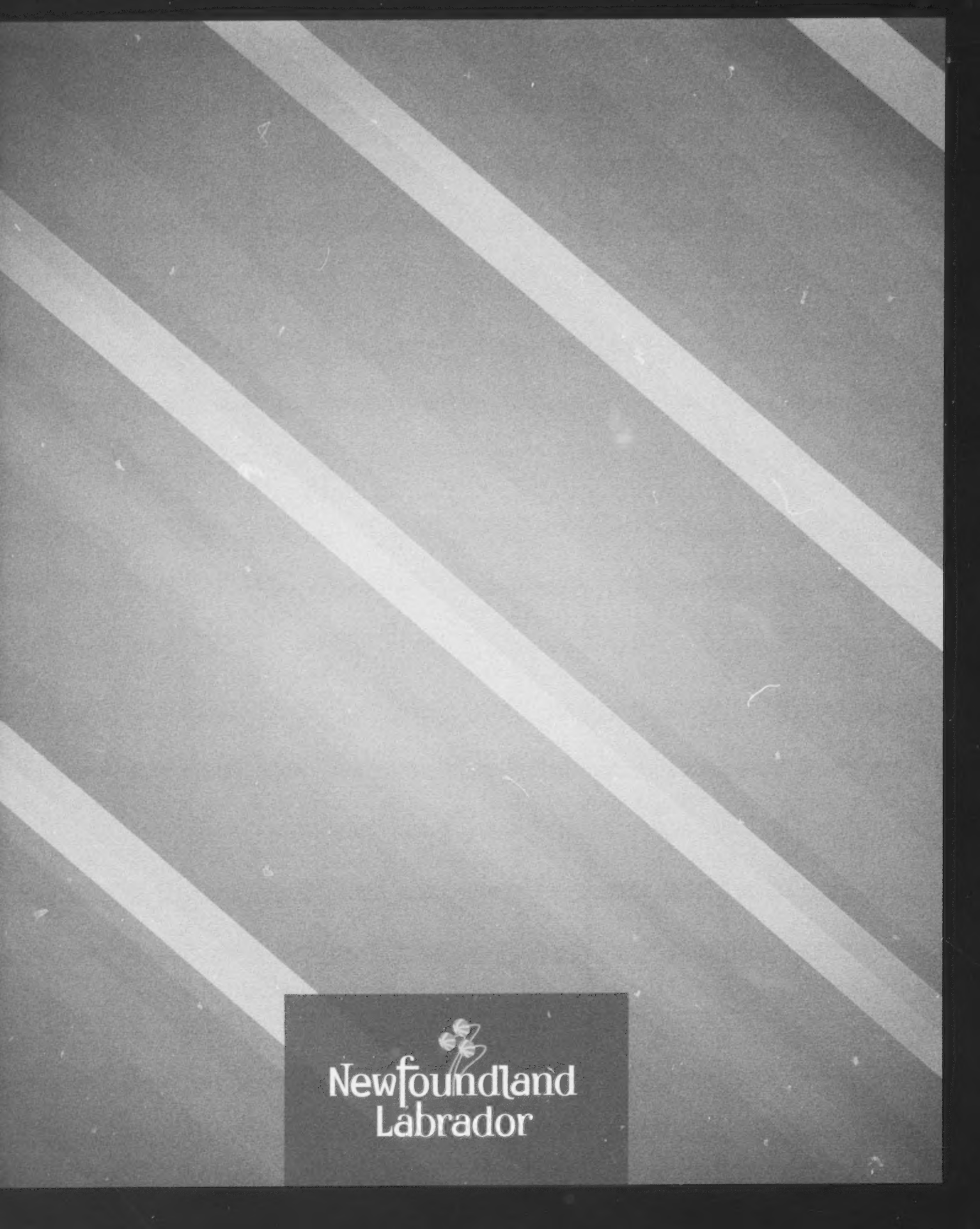
- Memorial University of Newfoundland
- College of the North Atlantic
- Student Loan Corporation of Newfoundland and Labrador
- Private Training Corporation
- Memorial University Pension Plan
- Provincial Apprenticeship and Certification Board
- Student Financial Assistance Appeal Board
- Income and Employment Support Appeal Board

The mandate of the Council on Higher Education is established in the *Council on Higher Education Act*. The Council is responsible for making recommendations to Memorial University, College of the North Atlantic and the Minister of Advanced Education and Skills with respect to:

- Strategic directions;
- Reducing duplication of effort and expense;
- Shared program areas;
- Cost-effective policies, standards and activities;
- Student credit transfer arrangements; and,
- Other related matters.

Please note:

- The Council on Higher Education was not active during 2014-15; however, the Council is anticipated to be active during 2015-16. At that time, this entity will be subject to the planning and reporting requirements of the *Transparency and Accountability Act*.


Newfoundland
Labrador